

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE
TO: Chief/FCS		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	
REMARKS:		
FROM: Chief Editor, London Bureau		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION

FORM NO. 241
1 FEB 55

REPLACES FORM 36-8
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(47)

LONDON BUREAU
FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE



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MLD-8047

3 November 1978




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Dear Joe:

Subject: Sourcelines

With summer leaves and staff changeovers here I haven't been able to get to this subject, but I would like to clear up two sourceline questions that remain unresolved, and also offer some general observations on the entire question of sourcelines:

1. Dar es Salaam sourcelines: To continue my exchange with  from August, we have received some new information from EAU (my LD221 of 14 August was based on info available here from the last chief of EAU). It turns out that EAU does in fact monitor Dar es Salaam on the shortwave frequencies of 15435, 9759 and 6105 kHz. But we have been getting conflicting reports from the unit about station announcements. At my request the BBC phoned EAU last week and the chief of the unit stated that Dar es Salaam does not announce beams. He sent the following service message later on the same day: "Confirm announcement as quoted by phone: 'This is the external service of Radio Tanzania, Dar es Salaam.'" This is clearly contrary to our FYI's from July on the Dar es Salaam programs audible here on 15435 kHz--LD241420 and subsequent FYI's--which included specific beam announcements. It seems clear that the EAU chief was talking only about the EAU-monitored newscasts when he said that no beam announcements are given. In any event, the BBC has a printed schedule from Radio Tanzania--from January of this year--which shows targets, so I don't intend to go back to EAU and ask them to check for beam announcements throughout the day, which presumably would just correspond to the radio's printed schedule. The schedule gives the following beams:

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0330-0500	East, Central and Southern Africa
0900-1030	East Africa (0900-1530 Sat-Sun)
1530-1915	East, Central and Southern Africa

Now, as far as sourcelines are concerned, if offered a choice, I would opt for "Dar es Salaam International Service in English" without hesitation. However, since it is current FCS policy to specify the beam, I would like to state the case again for use of the single sourceline "Dar es Salaam in English to East Africa."

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The problem is that EAU does not indicate beams on their items, merely using "Dar es Salaam English (time/date)." (EAU obviously does not keep track of the beams, and the News Bureau and SWB here don't use them.) That means the editors here must either remember that the Dar es Salaam beam changes at specific times of the day--not an easy task when you deal with something like 50 different countries--or look up the sourceline in the coverage schedule. It hasn't been too bad up to now with only two Dar es Salaam sourcelines: The 0400 cast has taken "Central and Southern Africa" up to now, and all the other casts have taken "East Africa." But when you add an extra complication--"East, Central and Southern Africa" would have to be used at the beginning and end of the day, with "East Africa" used in the middle--you just make it more difficult for the editors here to remember the proper sourceline. It would probably mean that the slot editor would have to look up the sourceline every time he wanted to send a Dar es Salaam item. That would be obviated by the use of a single sourceline: "Dar es Salaam in English to East Africa."

Principles and rules are fine, but when they complicate operations a slight modification seems well within bounds. If we were adhering strictly to the SLB format, it would be one thing; but the shortening of sourcelines is clearly permissible under FCS' current policy. In addition, in striving to achieve standardization with the BBC, FCS was willing to make arbitrary determinations of "primary audience" in some cases. Certainly "East Africa" could easily be considered the "primary audience" for Dar es Salaam broadcasts. Since we don't make any distinction at all between material carried in different beams by noncommunist radios, whether we say "to East Africa" or "to East, Central and Southern Africa"--or draw any distinctions between transmitter usage by such radios--can have no relevance at all for our consumers.

Thus, I would like to get approval to use "Dar es Salaam in English to East Africa" for all casts, with the exception of the 1815-1900 GMT segment for liberation programs. The sourcelines for the latter programs are not really a problem since items from the casts are always likely to be few and far between. These sourcelines are so unique, with the necessary subslugs, and so rarely used that they would have to be looked up no matter what the beam, so consolidating them into the "East Africa" usage would not make much difference. Use of the "East Africa" beam for all casts but the liberation programs would not be a violation of FCS policy, and it would simplify the assigning of sourcelines here, a much more time-consuming process than at any other FBIS bureau.

2. "Voice of Oman" sourcelines: In regard to WA381 of January, at my request the BBC checked the Tripoli "Voice of Oman" program again at 1830 GMT on 25 October and the radio gave the following opening announcement: "Voice of the popular front for the liberation of Oman. Our struggling arab Omani masses, brother listeners: We greet you on the road of the revolution and struggle and begin our transmission for today." It gave the following closing announcement at 1845 GMT: "Our struggling masses in Oman, our struggling masses everywhere: a revolutionary greeting, until we meet again." These are very similar to the announcements used back in January, though the closing announcement now is somewhat different. The Aden Voice of Oman program has

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different opening and closing announcements (JN271725 May cruising) but the Tripoli and Aden programs have one thing in common--they both say: "Voice of the popular front for the liberation of Oman." On the basis of the evidence, I would like to suggest the following sourcelines:

Aden Voice of the PFLO in Arabic to Oman

Tripoli Voice of the PFLO in Arabic to Oman and the Arab World

Both programs are obviously produced by the same body--the PFLO. Besides the fact that they both say "Voice of the PFLO," the inauguration of the Tripoli program was announced by the Aden program in terms that made it clear that the two are related (LD131620 January FYI). Thus, they should have similar sourcelines. The common element in their announcements is "Voice of the PFLO," and it seems logical to include that in both sourcelines. This would accord with the sourceline used back in 1974--"Voice of the PFLOAG"--when the Aden program called itself the "Voice of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf" (LD207 and WA912 of February 1974).

As far as beam is concerned, based on the reference in the present closing announcement to "our masses everywhere," as well as the item in the 19 January program (LD240930 FYI) commenting on the situation in Egypt, I would suggest that the Tripoli program is aimed at more than just the audience in Oman. If the PFLO was only interested in reaching Oman, they could just stick with the Aden program, which should be more easily heard there. Based on the Aden program announcements (JN271725 May cruising), that program seems clearly beamed to Oman. If we're going to specify a beam for the Tripoli program--as WA381 of January did--then logically the Aden program should have one also.

Not necessarily

As far as content is concerned, I've asked the BBC to ask EAU to send their recordings of the Aden Voice of Oman program for 25 and 26 October to compare them with the Tripoli Voice of the PFLO program recorded here on 25 October. (EAU monitors don't do program summaries--Caversham monitors don't either except for the major newscasts of the major stations--so to do a more comprehensive review would be a rather involved undertaking.) The Tripoli and Aden programs obviously won't be identical--the Tripoli show is only 15 minutes long while the Aden program is 45 minutes--but whether they repeat the same items or use the same announcers remains to be seen.

As far as sourcelines in general are concerned, since John noted in WA855 of 9 August that "it is likely that several aspects of basic sourceline policy will be reconsidered," I'd like to offer some comments from this perspective:

1. Adoption of the studio-language-beam format across the board would be a step backward as far as this bureau is concerned. While I wouldn't necessarily suggest that FBIS policy be established based on the needs of just one bureau, then again no other bureau uses anywhere near the number or variety of sourcelines that this bureau does.

I'm not sure that there is a sufficient understanding there of just what it means to use sourceline stamps. The problem is that broader use of the SLB

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format would increase the number of different sourcelines and thus the number of necessary stamps--admittedly not an extremely large increase, as far as this bureau is concerned, but an increase nevertheless. It's easy to say, "merely match the sourceline stamp to the proper cast"; it's not quite that simple when you're sitting in front of trays with 80 or so stamps (or even 90-100 with full use of SLB format) trying to pick out the right one. We try to keep our stamps in alphabetical order by country--though human frailties being what they are they don't always stay that way--and this eases the task somewhat, but when you have multiple sourceline stamps for a particular country you still have to sort out the right one. Doesn't sound like much, and in essence it isn't; but at a bureau in which the slot editor has a far more complex job than at any other bureau, making the assigning of sourcelines more difficult--even if only slightly--is not helping him. And that's somewhat ironic since the SLB format was devised for standardization with the BBC, which was aimed primarily at benefiting this bureau.

Even if we were to achieve standardization with the BBC, use of the SLB format would negate some of the advantages realized for this bureau. Standardization would not eliminate our sourceline stamps--though it would reduce their use somewhat--while the SLB format would increase the number of stamps we had to use.

If we don't achieve standardization with the BBC, it would be very difficult for this bureau to adhere to the SLB format. The main problem is that the BBC monitors are not consistent in rendering sourcelines on their copy. For example, some will put simply "Lisbon for Africa" rather than going to the trouble of typing out "Lisbon for Angola Mozambique Sao Tome and Principe and Portuguese in South Africa" (and station announcers are not always consistent in announcing the beam). The editor must look up all of these casts in the coverage schedule or the bureau's guide to sourcelines in order to assign the proper sourceline (there are two different sourcelines, for example, for Lisbon broadcasts to Africa). Fortunately the problem doesn't occur too often now--Lisbon is the only noncommunist radio for which we have as many as five different sourcelines for international service casts--but if FBIS adopted a strict SLB format the problem would crop up much more frequently.

I might note that consistency in the rendering of noncommunist sourcelines is not a concern of BBC production components, so they don't exert any pressure in this regard. The News Bureau doesn't even use the language or time in most cases--simply saying "(DPA)" or "(Rome Radio)"--and the SWB's use simply "Johannesburg in English for Abroad," etc.

2. If the SLB format seemed to offer significant advantages, the above reservations might not influence too strongly my opinion of it--though its adoption would still have a noticeably adverse impact here--but it doesn't seem to offer that :

a. It seems clear that the SLB format would not result in any greater standardization within FBIS than was achieved with the simple use of "international service" or "overseas service," etc. When a beam is not announced, under FCS' current policy we will continue to use the "international service" format.

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Thus, we will still not have a consistent form for sourcelines, with some in the SLB format but a number of others in the "international service" format. Also under current policy, very long sourcelines may be shortened to just the "primary audience." The criteria for this have not been defined, but again in a number of cases we won't be adhering strictly to the use of announced beams. This format will also complicate the process of bureaus trying to formulate sourcelines prior to consultation with FCS by raising such questions as: How long a sourceline is too long; what is the primary audience; what is the beam--a specific region or country, "neighboring countries" as with Ehtiopia, or something else?

b. Use of the SLB format would be a drawback in a crisis, when ad hoc coverage is undertaken. Instead of being able to slap on a simple "international service" sourceline, the editor would have to scramble around for an SLB sourceline at the worst possible time--when dealing with high-precedence material. This has already been a problem at this bureau, since the BBC lays on ad hoc coverage relatively frequently, but it would also have an impact at other bureaus. The FCS program schedules presently do not cover every country, and they obviously can't keep up with new programming on a current basis.

c. FBIS would spend a great deal of time and effort worrying about beams and keeping them up-to-date, when for most of the stations monitored the information is of no significance or value. While the beam is obviously of significance with communist radios which target their material, it seems unlikely that beams serve any function at all with noncommunist, nonclandestine radios and it's hard to see how they could be of any particular value to analysts. Even if there were any significance, we certainly don't make enough of a distinction between what is carried by such radios for the domestic as opposed to international audiences for analysts to draw any kind of conclusions from specific beams. The problems just over the past year in sorting out beams for Karachi, Kabul and Lisbon are a good indication of what would be involved with a strict SLB format.

d. While of lesser importance given the BBC's current view of the question, adoption of the SLB format would not improve our chances of achieving standardization with the BBC, and in fact would likely have the opposite effect. The BBC's objections to the format have never been overcome and are not likely to be. (I might note here that the BBC has said nothing lately about standardization and Novakovic seems just as disinclined as ever to pursue the matter.)

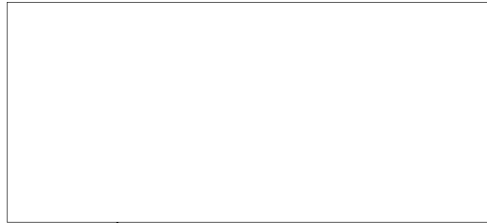
Thus, the SLB format does not seem to offer any advantages, and it has several drawbacks. In particular, adoption of the format would have an adverse impact on this bureau, which after all has more of a stake in the question of sourcelines than any other bureau and which files a rather large percentage of the total FBIS field bureau wordage. But it would also affect other bureaus in requiring extra effort to provide information totally superfluous to the needs of our consumers.

3. Where we want to indicate that broadcasts from noncommunist radios are for international audiences, it would seem that use of "international service" across the board, eliminating such variations as "general service," etc, offers

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the best, and perhaps only, way to have truly uniform sourcelines which would be easy to formulate and easy to apply. Clandestine radios and "radios" using the facilities of other stations (Voice of Namibia, Voice of Zimbabwe, etc.) are special cases and their sourcelines could continue to include beams, but for all other noncommunist stations there would be one standard sourceline.

Sincerely,



Chief Editor, London Bureau

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